

Parenting the First Year

Months
10-11

How Baby Is Changing

Is your baby saying any real words yet? A child just learning to talk often uses one word to mean many things. *Real* words are words that mean only one thing.

Even if your baby says “no,” and shakes her head back and forth, she may not know what the word means. She may even say “no” while really meaning, “yes.” Don’t take all “no’s” too seriously.

If your baby began to pull to a stand last month, she will probably learn how to get down by herself soon. She may be fascinated by stairs. With a gate on the second or third step from the bottom, she can practice climbing but can’t fall too far.

Watch your baby’s hands. She may pick up things with just a first finger and a thumb. Remember when she had to use her whole hand to smear food into her mouth? She has come a long way.

Don’t worry if your baby doesn’t seem to do things on schedule. She is unique and will develop at her own rate. As long as she is making progress, just enjoy watching her grow.

Too Much Advice?

All parents are learning how to best care for their child. Struggles and frustration are a normal part of that learning. It is important to have people who can offer care and support when facing those struggles. Friends and relatives may be eager to help.

Out of their concern, others may offer ideas that may be unwelcome. How to comfort a crying child, when and what to feed, how to guide a child’s behavior and many other issues can be sensitive topics.

Toilet Learning? Not Yet

Neither your baby’s mind nor small muscles have developed enough to control a bowel movement or urination. The end of the second year is time enough to start testing those muscles. Keeping dry may come even later.

Some children train themselves once they can control the muscles involved. Don’t think about toilet learning for another 1 1/2 to 2 years from now.

When You Feel the Pressure of Too Much Advice, Here Are a Few Thoughts To Remember:

- As the parent, you are the person who has to make the decision. It is important that you feel comfortable with your choice.
- Families need people who care. Friends and relatives are partners in raising your child. Treat them with respect and gentleness.
- Talk about your ideas calmly and honestly. There are pros and cons to everything.
- Take the time to learn what you can about the subject. Your local library, extension office or health-care provider can offer resources.
- The overall goal is to do what is best for your child.

Dealing with well-meant advice is a challenge. When so many people care so much about a child, there are bound to be disagreements. Patience and understanding are keys to surviving these times.

Your Baby Wants You to Know by the End of 11 Months

How I Grow

- I crawl up stairs, but I don't know how to get back down.
- I walk if you hold my hands.
- I may begin to sidestep, holding on to furniture, to get around a room.
- I sit down from a standing position.
- I climb up onto chairs and then climb down again.
- I try to feed myself and help hold my cup, but I'm not very good at it.
- I sometimes have trouble sleeping at night.

How I Talk

- I may understand simple sentences.
- I listen for familiar words.
- I may make the same sounds all day long. I'm practicing learning to talk.

How I Respond

- I react to your approval and disapproval.
- I cry if another child gets more attention than I do.
- I still don't like being away from you.
- I like to imitate people, gestures and sounds.

How I Understand

- I know which toys are mine, and I have some favorites.
- I will look for something if I see you hide it.

How I Feel

- I have many feelings now — sad, happy, mad, scared, hurt.
- I can be very moody, and I get upset easily.
- I may still feel shy around people I don't know.
- I am very sensitive to other people's moods.

How You Can Help Me Learn

- Show me things you want me to know. For example, clap your hands so I can learn by imitating you.
- Read books with me.
- Play hide-and-seek with me. If you hide behind a chair, I can come and find you.
- Put some things such as pictures and an unbreakable mirror down on my level so I can see them.

He or She, Him or Her

These newsletters give equal time to both sexes. That's why we take turns referring to children as "he" or "she." Keep in mind that we are talking about all children when we use "he" or "she."

REMINDER: Your baby should have a health-care provider visit at 1 year of age.

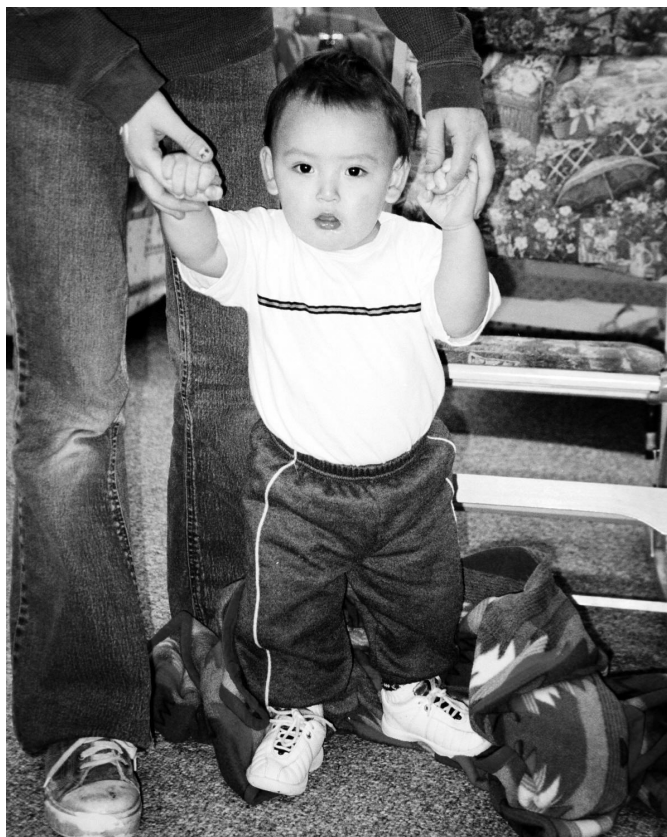
Children are very different from each other. Don't worry if your child manages some skills earlier or later than other children. Most children tend to focus on one area, like physical or language development, and pay less attention to other areas. Get to know your unique baby and celebrate each new skill with him!

Emotional Health for Babies

Meeting your baby's physical needs is important, but so is caring for his mental health.

Some ways to promote good mental health in your baby or toddler are:

- Hold and cuddle him often.
- Reassure with gentle touches and calm words.
- Give him admiring glances and smiles.
- Gently rub his back to soothe him if he is tired, tense or crabby.
- Give him a chance to explore toys or the world around him at his own pace without interrupting.
- Watch for signs of distress, like fear or pain, and respond quickly by comforting and reassuring him.
- Wait until he shows signs of being ready before teaching new skills like feeding himself.
- Remember he has different moods (happy, tired, excited) and a unique personality. Be patient with changes in moods and temperament.
- Call out cheerful words when he crawls, grin with encouragement from a distance and smile with pride to let him know you are there for him if he needs you.
- Explain your actions even when your baby is very young. Tell him what you are doing, where you are going and that you will be back soon.
- Respect his need to be left alone at times while you quietly observe.



Getting Ready To Walk

Your baby's first steps are cause for celebration, but the process of learning to walk started months ago as she was gaining control over her legs and arms. Some babies take their first steps by 11 months of age. Others wait until 15 or 16 months.

Many babies pull themselves to a standing position for the first time between 6 and 10 months of age. They hold on to furniture, the crib or your leg.

The next step toward walking is called cruising. Your baby holds on to furniture and walks sideways. As she gets better, she will stand further away from the furniture, using it only for balance.

Falls are quite common when your baby first starts walking. Learning to walk takes real courage. You can help by

watching for safety hazards, such as chairs or tables that tip, dangling tablecloths or cords, and sharp corners. Provide a soft surface to ease falls, and offer praise and love when she gets discouraged. Tell her, "Good try. You can do it."

After your baby is confident about walking while holding furniture, she is ready to take steps while holding your hands. This can be scary for her, so go just a few steps unless she wants to go on. She may enjoy this and insist that you walk with her all day long!

Your baby will learn to walk even without your help, but it is fun to take time to help her learn and practice when she shows an interest. It's also important to let her know it's O.K. when she falls.

Q and A

My daughter crawls around and pulls everything out of drawers, cupboards and waste-baskets. I want to let her explore, but I'm worried that this will become a bad habit if I don't do something. What do you suggest?

Don't worry about your baby developing bad habits yet. A healthy 10-month-old is doing what comes naturally — exploring.

Your baby pulls things out of drawers and wastebaskets, turns things over, drags toys all over the house and examines anything she can touch. But she is not doing it just to spite you or anyone else.

Drawer and cupboard latches will keep her out of things that could be dangerous. Hide wastebaskets behind latched doors. Try to keep a special drawer or cupboard open for her with safe plastic bowls, wooden spoons, pots and pans to play with.

Very soon your baby will be walking and running and won't have time to sit still. She is just going through a normal phase of development.

As she gets older, help her learn to return the items. Make a game of putting things away. Turn the situation into an opportunity for learning good habits such as picking up after herself.

Discontinuing the Bottle

At about 9 months, many babies show a readiness for weaning, though they will probably change their minds in a few weeks. This readiness will reappear at about one year. For now, continue to offer the cup as often as possible. Don't forget to put breastmilk or formula in the cup as well as water or juice.

To help things along, eliminate the midday bottle first, then the evening and morning ones; save the bedtime bottle for last, since it's often the most difficult for a toddler to give up.

Television Is Not a Babysitter

From Bugs Bunny's catchy musical tunes and bright colors to the fast-paced drama of soap operas, your infant may be "watching" television. But is this good for your child?

The American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) urges parents to avoid television for children younger than 2. Research on early brain development shows that babies and toddlers have a critical need for direct interactions with parents and other significant caregivers for healthy brain growth and the development of appropriate social, emotional and cognitive skills.

Infants are naturally attracted to the color, music and action on the screen and may watch for up to 15 minutes at a time. However, they don't understand what they are watching and may become overstimulated.

Infants don't gain anything from watching TV. In fact, it might be harmful if it means you are beginning to use the TV as a babysitter or you are beginning to start the TV habit at an early age.

Young children (ages birth to 5) are unable to tell fantasy from reality. They also are influenced by violence and images on television, so it's important to set a good example now.

Wait until children are at least 18 months and then watch children's programs together. Limit television viewing time at this age and as children grow.

Active play is a much better learning experience than passive television watching. When families do watch a short program, talk about it. Select shows that will teach nonviolence and helpful behavior. Never use the TV as a babysitter.

Important Checklist for a Poison-Proof Home

- Keep all household poisons and medicines in their original, labeled, child-resistant containers.
- Lock poisons and medicines out of the reach and sight of children.
- Be as careful with nonprescription medicines as you are with prescription medications.
- Keep purses and diaper bags out of children's reach. Also be aware of visitors' purses and suitcases.
- Never leave children alone with household products or medications. If you are using a product, take a child with you when stopping to answer the telephone or the door. Most poisonings occur when the product is in use.
- Return household and chemical products to safe storage immediately after use.
- Know which plants in and around your home can be poisonous, and keep them away from children.
- Take the time to teach children about poisonous substances.
- Keep the number of your poison center on or near your telephone.

Giving Medication at Home

- Follow the directions and health-care provider's orders exactly.
- Give all the prescription medicine even if the child gets better (unless the health-care provider says otherwise).
- Never give aspirin to a child.
- Keep all medicine out of reach of children and make sure the lid is closed tightly.
- Don't put the medicine in a bottle of formula or juice; you won't know how much the baby has received if all the liquid isn't taken.
- Try giving your baby liquid medicine in a nipple. Flush the nipple with a little water for the child to suck to be sure all the medication is taken. Or, use a plastic dropper, vitamin dropper or medicine syringe without the needle that you can buy at a drugstore. Squirt into the cheek area or on the middle of the tongue, not down the throat.
- Have the baby lying back but not flat on his back.
- Depress the baby's chin with your thumb to open her mouth. After giving medication, release your thumb and allow her to swallow. You may need to gently hold her chin up until the medicine is swallowed.
- Chilling liquid medicines may improve the flavor. Be sure to read directions or check with your pharmacist to see if the medicine can be chilled.
- Two adults may be helpful for giving medication: one to hold the baby and the other to give the medication.
- Never tell a child medicine is candy or tastes good. He may try to eat more later. Explain that the medicine will help him feel better in time.

Employed Parents: Can Baby Be Affected?

Many parents wonder what effect their employment will have on their child. The main points to consider are:

- Do you need a job to pay bills?
- Do you like your job? Does it make you feel good?
- Is your child in caring hands while you are at work? Do you have quality child care?
- Do you work for an employer who is understanding of family needs and allows flexibility?
- Do the number of hours you work affect the amount of time you spend with your child?

Whether you are male or female, these points are important to consider. If you are concerned about any of these points, your concern may result in stress that can have a negative impact on your child.

These questions may have raised some concerns for you. Talk to people at work or refer to your employee assistance program for resources.



Be Good to Yourself

If you feel stressed as a parent, you may need to give yourself a present — some time just for you. You can trade baby-sitting with another parent or trade a service, such as cooking a meal, in return for a few hours to yourself. You may feel guilty about taking time for yourself, but try not to. After all, you've earned it, you deserve it and you don't need to be embarrassed to ask for it.

Here are some suggestions:

- Take a long bath, go for a walk or a swim, see a movie or read.
- Spend some time with a friend — without children.
- Talk to someone about the stress you feel and what you might do to reduce it. Join a parenting group or other support group.
- Think about your future —investigate classes you might take, jobs for which you could apply and activities you would enjoy. Volunteer to gain some experience.

Taking time just for yourself will help you feel refreshed and ready to face parenthood again.

**NEVER
NEVER
NEVER**
Shake a Baby



Learning To Use a Spoon

About this age, your baby may want to use a spoon. A special baby spoon with a small bowl and a short handle that may be curved will make it easier for her to eat. A regular spoon is just too big for her mouth.

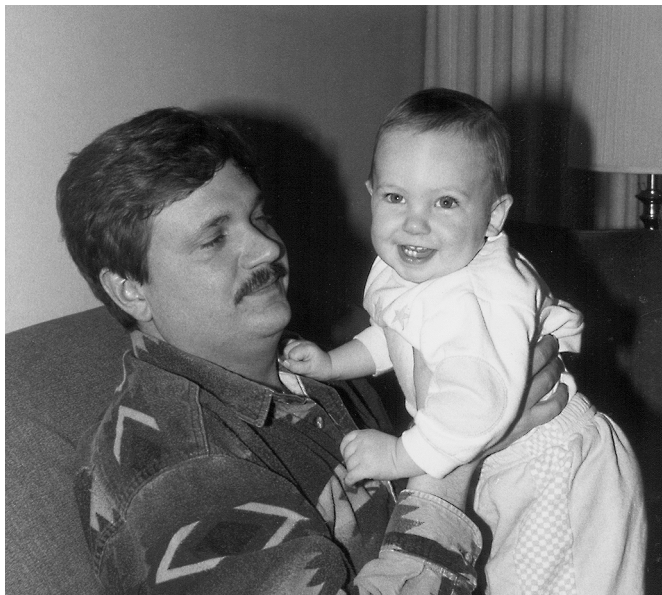
The food your baby tries to pick up with a spoon often lands on the floor. But she is learning, and practice makes perfect. Most babies don't become skilled with a spoon until well after their first birthday.

Here are some foods that will stick to the spoon and make learning easier:

- Pureed or mashed vegetables or fruits
- Mashed potatoes
- Cooked cereal (oatmeal, cream of rice or wheat)
- Cottage cheese or yogurt
- Macaroni and cheese
- Applesauce

If you're worried about her not getting enough food by feeding herself, continue using two spoons — one for her and one for you. Give her a spoonful of food between her efforts. Also, let her continue to eat finger foods.

Good food habits begin in infancy. Make mealtimes happy, not frustrating. With lots of praise, patience and encouragement, your baby will be a fun addition to your family dining table.



Bills, Bills, Bills

Many new parents find that the birth of a baby means it's time to get more serious about financial management. Total household expenses may increase 20 percent after the birth of a baby. Think about financial decisions carefully as you plan the future of your family.

Some common concerns are the need for a larger apartment/home; saving for your child's education; family health insurance plans; life insurance; writing or updating your will and naming a guardian for the child; and additional clothing, food and child-care costs.

For financial assistance, you may want to call the Village Family Service Center at 800.450.4019.

Some suggestions for family financial management include:

- Start a savings program now and realize that any amount of regular savings is a step in the right direction.
- Carefully examine housing options and call a real estate agent for help.
- Check with your employer, your bank or organizations you belong to and see what options for health and life insurance are available. Be aware of unfamiliar or too-good-to-be-true policies. Call the North Dakota insurance commissioner to check out any concerns you might have about a company (800.247.0560).

Parents need to make a will or revise a will to be sure a guardian for the child is named. If there's no will, the court will appoint a guardian, and this may not be in line with your wishes.

After your baby's birth, remember to stop by your employer's office for a W-4 form to adjust your exemptions.

The costs of food, clothing and other baby needs often surprise people. Adjusting to the monthly child-care bills may also be difficult.

My Baby Called Her Child-Care Provider "Mama" or "Dada"

Parents who use full-time child-care sometimes worry that their babies will feel more love for the child-care provider. When your baby calls another woman or man "mama" or "dada," you may feel hurt, jealous, guilty or confused.

Infants in child-care do form strong relationships with caregivers. Your baby uses the caregiver much as she uses you: to calm fears and to feel secure. In fact, the stronger the attachment to you, the easier it is to attach to a caregiver.

But care-givers do not replace the parents. Your child-care provider doesn't compete with you. He or she is a partner and helps you raise your baby but never replaces you. Your baby needs to feel secure and loved in every place she spends time—both at home and at child-care.

If your baby calls the child-care provider "Mama" or "Dada" by mistake, tell yourself, "How nice! My baby likes her teacher almost as much as me." But remember no one can replace you.

Quality child-care is the most valuable investment you can make in your child. If you need help finding child-care, call the Child-Care Resource and Referral agency in your area:

Fargo Area	800.941.7003
Grand Forks Area	888.778.3435
Bismarck Area	888.223.1510
Minot Area	800.450.7801
Jamestown Area	888.767.0350
Devils Lake Area	701.662.6589



NORTH DAKOTA
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Community Health Section
600 E. Boulevard Ave. Dept. 301
Bismarck, ND 58505-0200
ND Toll-free: 800.472.2286
701.328.2493

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Help Is Out There

Financial Health

Financial Planning

A consumer credit or family financial counselor is available through the Village Family Service Center. Offices are located throughout the state, including Fargo, Bismarck, Grand Forks, Minot and Jamestown. Call 800.450.4019 anywhere in the state to schedule an appointment. There may be a small fee for this service. The Village also offers internet counseling at www.villagefamily.org.

Visit the Parenttime web site at www.pathfinder.com for money saving tips and ideas on budgeting for baby costs.



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